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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2016

**911 help
with a text**

Niagara introduces 911 texting.
Page 5

**Teens
remembered**

Large crowd for Hockey Night in Welland.
Page 5

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Fire chief opens up



ALLAN BENNER/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Fire prevention officer Scott Lawson, left, and Port Colborne Chief Tom Cartwright, right, are pictured with a Niagara Regional Police forensics officers while investigating a fatal fire at 53 Nickel St. in Port Colborne. See more on page 2.

LOCAL NEWS

Never think it can't happen to you



**TOM
CARTWRIGHT**

As fire chief for the City of Port Colborne, I would like to offer sincere condolences to the Burd and Zivic families on behalf of all fire department personnel.

The loss of four members of your family in the horrific fire on Wednesday, Dec. 14, will have an ever-lasting effect on all of your family and friends.

The tragedy has affected the entire community. We will never understand fully the impact of tragedies such

as this. The community has rallied around those most affected.

Over the course of the last week an outpouring of kindness and support has impacted those most affected by this tragedy. From an emergency services perspective, the community has shown support through kind words and prayers. Port Cares through the Reach Our Centre and their staff were willing to share all that they have.

Our fire department personnel, made up of both full-time and volunteers, have been supported as never before. The Niagara Regional Police, Office of the Fire Marshal, city staff, city departments, in particular public works, have pro-

vided what assistance was required and stepped up and offered to do whatever it takes.

During the course of the fire in the early morning hours of Wednesday, Dec. 14, the Niagara Regional Police reacted to the emergency in ways that only can be described as hectic. Their officers assisted our personnel in frantic attempts to access the home and rescue occupants.

Fire department personnel attempted to enter the home on numerous occasions and did in fact locate a victim in the front portion of the home and removed her with the assistance of Niagara Regional Police officers.

A tragedy such as this

impacts all emergency service personnel. There has been an outpouring of support from across the province.

The emergency response community works hard to prevent tragedies such as these. When events such as those on Dec. 14 occur there is a feeling of failure. You question yourself as to what, why and how can we work to never see this happen again.

Quite simply, we cannot do it alone. We need everyone to realize that tragedies such as these can be prevented.

Simply remember that your lives depend on always

ensuring you put fire safety first:

- Ensure your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are properly placed and always working;
- Plan your escape in the event of a fire;
- Call 911 immediately;
- Candles are dangerous;
- If you smoke, remember the increased dangers;
- Remove combustibles from your homes;
- Use care when cooking;
- Make sure your heating appliances are serviced and properly used;
- Never use extension cords to replace permanent wiring;
- Never think it can't happen to you.

The tragedy has impacted all of the emergency responders. Your city's fire department has been affected.

Our personnel know how precious life is. We need you to help us save others from tragedies such as this. We cannot do it alone. For assistance, please contact City of Port Colborne Fire and Emergency Services at 905-834-4512.

Your continued prayers and thoughts for those involved, in particular the family and friends, are most appreciated.

Please ensure you live a fire safe life.



ALLAN BERNER/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Fire prevention officer Scott Lawson and Port Colborne Chief Tom Cartwright are shown with a Niagara Regional Police forensics officers while investigating a fatal fire at 53 Nickel St. in Port Colborne.

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There are no curbside collection day changes for December 2016 or January 2017. Garbage, Blue Box, Grey Box and Green Bin material will be collected on your regular collection day.

HOLIDAY GARBAGE EXEMPTIONS

In the week following Christmas (Dec. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30), residents may place double their regular weekly garbage limit to the curb on their collection day.

CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION

- Saturday, Jan. 7, 2017 ONLY
- Christmas trees must be at the curb by 7 a.m.
- Remove all ornaments and decorations
- Christmas trees wrapped in plastic or buried in snow will not be collected.
- No artificial trees

Local Games bid seems reasonable gamble



**DOUG
HEROD**

Nothing quite causes taxpayers to shudder like the prospect of hosting a big multi-sports extravaganza.

The Summer Olympics are the No. 1 horror story, a two-week long athletic spectacle held every four years that sucks billions of dollars out of public treasuries.

The Pan Am Games and Commonwealth Games operate on a much lesser scale, but they, too, cost a fortune and are major money-losers.

Promoters of these events, regardless of their size, all sling from the same songbook.

The competition will have a significant impact on the local economy, attract hordes of tourists, enhance the host municipality's profile and leave behind new or improved municipal infrastructure and athletics facilities that will benefit generations to come.

Hey, it's the least one should expect from spending a fortune, right?

Then there are, by comparison, the bargain basement events. Such as the Canada Summer Games.

They come with a much lower-profile and a correspondingly lower price tag.

It's the latter feature that makes Niagara taxpayer support for hosting the 2021 Games a reasonable gamble.

St. Catharines city council agreed this week to put its money where its mouth is by committing — provided Niagara's bid is successful — \$1.28 million over a four-year period to its hosting responsibilities.

This isn't chicken feed. But in most cases, the money is matched by the Canada Games organization and the investments will lead to improved recreational infrastructure in the city.

And here's the most encouraging part of the bid: no one is suggesting new facilities are required.

Existing venues should suffice. They include George Taylor Field (former home of St. Catharines Stompers) for baseball; Kiwanis Field for soccer; Meridian Centre for basketball; Niagara Olympic Track (West

Park) for track and field; downtown streets for cycling; the Henley course for rowing; and the Seymour-Hamish four-pool for swimming.

In addition, Meridian Centre will host the opening and closing ceremonies, with FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre serving as a staging area.

That's just St. Catharines, of course. Other Niagara municipalities have their own existing infrastructure, such as Welland International Flatwater Centre, which can be used to host Games-related activities.

Kudos to Niagara's game bid committee for taking advantage of what Niagara already has to offer. Mind you, there are a few caveats to this praise.

If the Olympics, Commonwealth or Pan Am games can be used as a gauge, what an organization promises in order to win the bid and what it actually implements can be two different things.

Costs also have a tendency to rise.

Lastly, there is the possibility a new outdoor stadium of sorts would be built on Brock University's southern lands to host the track and field events rather simply upgrading the grounds at West Park.

At various points in the process, the bid committee has talked about this outdoor stadium as a showpiece venue, one that would seat 3,500 spectators with the capability of accommodating additional temporary seating.

The building of an 8,000-seat stadium at Western University was a key selling point for London being awarded the Canada Summer Games in 2011.

Mind you, Western has a long-established, successful football team that uses the stadium. Brock has managed without football for more than 50 years.

Developing such a facility for a one-off event like the Summer Games seems bonkers. Seriously, folks, what sports team or other organization in Niagara is in dire need of a 3,500-seat facility to host their activities on a regular basis?

Then again, if Brock gets sold on the idea of going baldies on the building of an outdoor stadium, it's on their dime, not ours.

The bid committee has done a good job promoting Niagara's existing recreational infrastructure for the Games.

Whether those in charge of awarding the Games also place value on this commonplace, somewhat taxpayer-friendly approach remains to be seen.

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Niagara  Region

LOCAL NEWS

Turner, Jacques Hockey Night draws large crowd

LAURA BARTON
Postmedia Network

A charity event in memory of two Welland teens saw a huge turnout and massive pile of donations.

The Julia Turner and Dalton Jacques Hockey Night in Welland event took place last Tuesday night, with Team Purple and Team Yellow facing off in support of the teens who both died of cancer years apart.

Event organizer Linda Falowo-Atkinson estimated an attendance of 1,600 people for the event held in Welland's main arena. People brought food and money donations which totalled about 3,000 food items and \$3,000.

"(The Hope Centre) couldn't even pick everything up in one truckload," she said.

The food donations have gone to The Hope Centre, as well as have some of the funds raised. The rest of the money is being donated to Ronald McDonald House in Hamilton.

Falowo-Atkinson remarked how amazing the gesture is considering how many Welland residents face struggles of their own.

The community is a big part of why the event can even exist,



In this YouTube screenshot, Team Yellow celebrates its Julia Turner and Dalton Jacques Hockey Night in Welland game win. Team Yellow played on behalf of Jacques and faced off against Team Purple, who took shots for Turner.

though.

Paul Turner, Julia's father, said he is grateful to the community.

"To keep the memory of our kids alive means so much to us. Our community in Welland is just exceptional. You can't get any better," he said.

Last week was the anniversary

sary of Julia's death.

In the past, the hockey game was in his daughter's name, but Dalton was added after he lost his battle with cancer in March.

Turner described the relationship he has with the Jacques family as being a part of a club that nobody wants to join,

because it means the loss of a child. But they're able to support each other.

He said through faith and the support of the community, he and his family have been able to cope.

This year the hockey game was Team Purple, for Julia, ver-

sus Team Yellow, for Dalton. Turner said the game isn't about who wins or loses, but Team Yellow took the title. He called it an exciting game.

Falowo-Atkinson noticed a difference at this year's game.

"It's still exciting. It's still everybody's there for the right rea-

son, everybody there wanted to give back and everybody there loved these kids, but it was sad," she said, saying she could see the sadness in everyone's eyes.

"It can't be easy for the families to get out there and be centered."

This was the fifth year for the event, and she said always checks with the families to make sure it's OK to continue with it because it's in their kids' names.

She wants to continue the event next year, too, but hopes for more help as the event grows. This year was particularly challenging because it was starting from scratch because a new logo, new jerseys and more people were involved. She used all the help she could get.

Falowo-Atkinson wants to continue with the event to continue to uphold the positive values projected by the two teens.

"It's so important, especially this time of the year, to give back to the community," she said. "That's probably the major key: these kids were all about giving. They were selfless. They thought about others before they thought about themselves."

barton@postmedia.ca
Twitter: @LBaronInbure

Niagara introduces 911 texting

MARYANNE FORTH
Postmedia Network

A new tool to reach emergency responders is getting thumbs up.

Niagara 911 and local emergency services have launched a program that allows the deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired members of the community to text 911.

The new technology, T9-1-1, allows emergency operators to communicate through text when the need arises.

It can be used whenever police, firefighters, Niagara EMS or Niagara Parks Police are required to respond.

"We've been working in excess of a year to get Text 911 up and running. It's been a multi-step process," Niagara Regional Police Staff Sgt.

Dave Weeks said of the initiative, which is meant to increase accessibility of local emergency services.

To use the service, a cellphone must be registered for T9-1-1 with the phone's service provider. The phone and its service plan must be capable of sending and receiving text messages.

There is no cost to register.

To use the service, users must first place a conventional voice call to 911.

That call is flagged as coming from a registered T9-1-1 phone and prompts the emergency operator to initiate a text chat with the device using a secondary software, Weeks said.

A call is first required to provide 911 with initial data about its source that cannot otherwise be immediately obtained

through text.

Throughout the duration of the call and text session, the operator can hear background noise from the caller's end, which will be used to add any pertinent information to the call log that may aid first responders.

"The reality is most of the callers who are registering do have the capability of either speech or hearing," Weeks said.

Rather than conduct the critical conversation in writing in both directions, which can take substantially longer than a phone call, the caller can identify whether they're able to hear or speak so the operator can conduct the conversation accordingly, he said.

"Our operator can do the typing and the caller can do the speaking or vice versa."

While it has been suggested in some communities that texting 911 should be made available to the general public, Weeks said that concept comes with "a lot of pitfalls."

"A conversation takes four to five times as long (by text) and it's a constant battle here to answer these phones as quickly as possible," he said. "We just want to get someone on the way to help."

The service, if opened to all residents, would also require additional resources for added personnel, he said.

"When people understand the personnel that would be required as a result, they would say let's just call."

Connectivity may also be a hindrance as texts to 911 are reliant on the phone carrier's network, whereas calls to 911



GETTY IMAGES

come through dedicated infrastructure that has redundancy and backup power sources built in, Weeks said.

Niagara 911 has no control over the delivery success and timeliness of text messaging content.

Weeks estimated that less than 100 people in Niagara are expected to register for the service.

He stressed that no cellphone can initiate a texting session with 911, whether retrieved or otherwise. If a call from a registered phone is not first made, texts to 911 will not be delivered.

For more information on the service, visit www.textwith911.ca.

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LOCAL NEWS

Former CEO explores 'protirement'

DON FRASER
Postmedia Network

The man was a Cape Breton coal miner, retired in name only. Ellis Katsos was struck by a conversation with him — one of dozens for a book exploring ways that people are reinventing themselves in senior years.

His interviewee had retired at 65, but you'd never know it 18 years later.

Soon after his formal career ended, the man opened a gift shop, which evolved into a bustling restaurant.

He'd be there at 7:30 a.m. every day — before his daughters got in — sliding the turkey into the oven and whipping up fish chowder. Later, each day, the former miner returned to help close the eatery.



Ellis Katsos is near completion of his lifestyle book on "protirement."

"I said to him, 'Why? You don't have to do this,'" said Katsos, speaking inside his Port Dalhousie home.

See PROTIREMENT on A13



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LOCAL NEWS

No rest for the healthy after retirement

PROTIREMENT from AZ

"He told me, 'When a lot of my friends retired from the mines, they put their feet up and did nothing. Within two years, they were dead or had illnesses.

"I didn't want to go that way ... if you keep your body moving, your mind keeps moving and you stay healthy."

It's a message that kept flowing through interviews for Katsof's forthcoming publication *Life 3.0: Protirement not Retirement: The Boomer Alternative*.

Katsof, a recently retired CEO of Niagara's Pathstone Mental Health, racked up an impressive list of those conversations.

Among them are music greats Ronnie Hawkins and Lona Boyd, former broadcaster Lloyd Robertson and former Canadian prime minister Paul Martin.

Others to reveal unique "protections" are former Apple CEO Gil Amelio and the first U.S. Homeland Security secretary Tom Ridge.

I've interviewed some very-well

PROTIREMENT

Ellis Katsof says his book *Life 3.0: Proirement not Retirement: The Boomer Alternative* is partly finished. He's in discussions with two publishers, and hopes to have the book done by April.

A full website should be running soon, with a holding page in place at MyProtirement.com and a Facebook page for 'My Protirement' now active.

known people in Canada and the States, as well as people from every walk of life," said Katsof, who is 65.

"And everybody said it differently, but they basically said the same thing, 'You need to keep active.'"

See PROTIREMENT on A14

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Today's generation living longer than their parents

RETIREMENT from A13

Katsos observes a crucial difference for this baby boomer generation: they're living longer than their parents.

"Today, if we're healthy we know we're going to live another 20 to 30 years. You can't stay at home, travel and golf for 20 years, you need to be actively engaged."

He said 110 interviews were done for a book he hopes to release next spring, along with an online-based business to focus on consulting, speaking and setting up a planner related to retirement.

The author explained that term as a process he's discovered.

We retire from a lifelong job, then go through a transition or an "unknown zone."

In an ideal scenario, we figure out how to "protrite" by possibly staying employed, while keeping intellectually, socially and community-engaged.

Katsos said a mission of his will be to highlight common activities people do to overcome a retirement stagnation, and the changes they face.

In his own case, after a retirement last January, Katsos set up a management consulting business. It was a gig he'd done before.

"I knew I needed to keep busy. Then

I got bored," said Katsos, who lives with his wife, Colette McGrath, executive director of St. Catharines-based Quest Community Health Care.

"I'd been doing this work for 40 years, and figured out I need to do something different ... that's when I started talking to people."

"After I did 20 to 25 interviews, I realized I had the contents of a book," he said.

"So I went to the store looking for books about retirement planning and they were all about money. There was very little about lifestyle planning."

Among things he's observed that make for successful retirements are engaging hobbies, boosted social activities, volunteer and political work, community building and entrepreneurial ventures.

Above all, boomers "shun the word retirement," he said.

They also emphasize a deep-seated need in later years to give back to the community.

"Everything is open to these people," he said.

"These baby boomers are embracing the world. They are doing the things they love doing, and doing multiple things."

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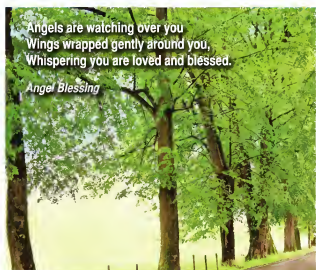
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